



# MLMA MILESTONES

## NEARSHORE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

*The state's most comprehensive management plan ever developed for ocean fishing.*

### Background

Nearshore fisheries have existed for decades. But a recent market for live fish used in the restaurant business and shipped overseas, started in Southern California in the 1980s and since then ricocheted to Northern and Central California. As of 2001, the landings of live finfish in California have increased from 20,000 pounds worth \$20,000 to 1.2 million pounds worth more than \$1.3 million. Because fishermen primarily target small, immature nearshore fishes, increasing numbers of fish are being harvested before most get a chance to reproduce. When the effects of this new commercial fishery are added to the already substantial recreational fishery, it becomes clear that nearshore fish populations have been placed under enormous fishing pressure. The Legislature under the Marine Life Management Act decided to take a comprehensive approach to managing the nearshore fishery.

### The Plan

The Nearshore FMP will guide the state's management of recreational and commercial fisheries along the coast. The plan aims to conserve and protect the nearshore ecosystem and its marine stocks, including 13 species of rockfish, California sheephead, greenlings, cabezon, and scorpionfish. Because all rockfishes are covered under the Pacific Fishery Management Council's Groundfish Management Plan, DFG is coordinating with the PFMC and NOAA Fisheries to ensure conformity with federal regulations.

DFG staff met with interested individuals and organizations across the state to ensure broad participation in the development of the plan. In addition, a Nearshore Advisory Committee, composed of commercial fishermen, recreational anglers, divers and environmentalists, was also established to provide DFG and the Commission with management recommendations for the plan.

### Facts

California's nearshore ecosystem is known as one of the most productive ocean areas in the world, encompassing 2,550 sq. miles and generating more than \$40 million in revenue. The DFG's ecosystem approach to managing the state's nearshore fishery relies heavily on good science and is the result of landmark legislation.

The Nearshore FMP is available online at [www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/nfmp/index.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/nfmp/index.html).

## **WHITE SEABASS FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

*White seabass are making a comeback from previous low population levels only a few decades ago.*

The Marine Life Management Act calls for a White Seabass Fishery Management Plan, which was originally adopted by the Fish and Game Commission in March of 1996. A final draft of the plan was amended and brought into compliance with the Marine Life Management Act, and became law on April 4, 2002.

White seabass are large, highly prized fish of the croaker family that are sought by both recreational and commercial fishermen. They occur in waters primarily off the coast of Southern California. Historically, their range has been as far north as the San Francisco Bay area. White seabass are recovering in California's ocean waters from low population levels of the mid-to-late 1900s. The current recovery is occurring under management designed to provide for moderate harvests while protecting young white seabass and spawning adults through season, size, bag, and gear provisions.

To view the plan, log on to [www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/wsfmp/index.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/wsfmp/index.html). A white seabass fact sheet is also available at [www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/factsheet.pdf](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/factsheet.pdf).

## **THE MASTER PLAN: A GUIDE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS AS DIRECTED BY THE MARINE LIFE MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1998.**

*The Master Plan will serve as a roadmap for DFG's development of management plans for California's fisheries.*

The Marine Life Management Act, which became law on Jan. 1, 1999, requires DFG to develop a master plan that specifies the process and resources needed to prepare, adopt, and implement fishery management plans (FMPs) for sport and commercial marine fisheries managed by the state. The master plan must also provide a prioritized list of fisheries for future FMPs, describe ongoing and additional DFG data collection activities conducted to acquire essential fishery information, provide a process for meaningful constituent involvement in the development of FMPs, and specify a review process for the master plan.

To download a copy, log on to [www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/masterplan/index.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/masterplan/index.html).

## **CALIFORNIA'S MARINE LIVING RESOURCES: A STATUS REPORT**

*The best information available for marine and estuarine fisheries managed by the state*

The status of the fisheries report is a fourth edition in a series of reports that address the status of California's marine and anadromous fisheries, and other marine life. The first report was published in December, 2001. Under the MLMA, future annual reports should cover one-quarter of all marine and estuarine fisheries managed by the state. *California's Living Marine Resources* is available online at [www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/status/index.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/status/index.html).

## **MARKET SQUID FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

*A management program for California's market squid resource that will ensure sustainability and reduce the potential for overfishing*

The Market Squid Fishery Management Plan (MSFMP) was adopted by the California Fish and Game Commission on August 27, 2004.

The MSFMP establishes a management program for California's market squid resource, including new regulations and a restricted access program that will limit the number of vessels in the fishing fleet. The MSFMP also institutes ecosystem and habitat protections, which include closing areas to market squid fishing in the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and other areas.

The California market squid, popularly known in restaurants as "calamari," ranges from southeastern Alaska to Baja California, Mexico. In 2003, the fleet landed more than 90 million pounds (45,200 tons) of squid worth \$24.1 million. The squid resource is also an important source of bait for the state's recreational fisheries and is a valuable forage item for marine fish, birds and marine mammals.

For information on the MSFMP, check out DFG's website at [www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/marketsquid/index.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/marketsquid/index.html).